

# The American Record Guide



TWENTY-FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION



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THE AMERICAN TAPE GUIDE

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ON THE COVER: Jennie Tourel, whose latest recording is reviewed on page 504.

I RESPECTFULLY suggest to all enterprising A & R executives (and lucky the one who gets there first) that they seek out a young lady from Enid, Oklahoma named Vida Chenoweth, now resident in New York and much in need of discovery. Her forte is Bach on the marimba, an admittedly unlikely but oh so hi-fi instrument on which she performs with the last measure of virtuosity and musicianship. I am a purist myself regarding the baroque repertory, but I warrant that I have never heard such works as the E Major Partita, for example, played with so much linear clarity. . . Tape reviews will be resumed in the next issue, which marks the beginning of our Silver Jubilee year of publication. As you might infer, we have several festive features scheduled. . . Scientifically inclined sound addicts will want to know that Vox is readying a release taped at the rocket base in Florida. Meantime, they might investigate "Voices of the Satellites"—which is to say the signals sent out by Sputnik I and II and Explorer I, II, and III—as captured by Prof. Thomas A. Benham in his laboratory at Haverford College. This may be ordered only from Taben Recordings, Box J-224, Ardmore, Pennsylvania. The price for either a ten-inch LP disc or a five-inch, double-track tape is \$3.95. Both include a commentary by Professor Benham, who is otherwise famous for his development of scientific devices to aid those who are, as he is, totally blind. . . Bruno Walter has re-recorded seven of the Beethoven nine in California. . . Random thoughts about ballet music: Kapp, while you are still on your "Opera Without Words" kick why not consider the Rieti adaptation of Bellini's "Sonnambula" as prepared for George Balanchine's beautiful ballet? . . . RCA Victor, why not reissue on Camden, if contractually possible, your old shellac performance of Sibelius' *Belshazzar's Feast*? I cannot say whether or not the Sadler's Wells production deserves its place in limbo, but the music is wonderful and it is not on LP. . . Coming: yet another new label—Capitol EMI. The initial release includes a "Suor Angelica" starring, appropriately, Victoria de los Angeles. —J.L.

# *Homage in search of a date*

By JOHN W. BARKER

**W**ROTE one Purcell biographer: "If, as an ironical writer has been pleased to allege, ignorance is the first requisite of the historian, then the biographer of Purcell must be accounted singularly well equipped." While this observation applies with frustrating consistency to virtually all of the composer's personal life, we may note it especially in connection with the release of this new Vanguard/Bach Guild set. For our ignorance in general applies specifically to Purcell's birth.

Purcell's origins are clouded with much obscurity. The Purcell family contributed several musicians to the English scene, but their relationships are not completely clear. A. J. Westrup has apparently solved to the satisfaction of most the mystery of the great Henry's parentage; he maintains that Thomas Purcell, and not another Henry, was his father. The question of the date of Purcell's birth is another matter, however, and one which cannot be answered precisely. On the basis of scanty evidence it has been conjectured that the date must have been between November 21, 1658 and November 20, 1659. Westrup has pushed the latter terminus back to August 11, 1659. More definite we cannot be.

All this may seem, of course, rather academic, and our uncertainty about such details by no means affects enjoyment of

the composer's music itself. And yet in an indirect sense, it does have an effect. In this day of commemorative celebrations, "live" or on records, it is a distinct handicap for a composer to be without a birth date, especially one who deserves to be heard more than he is. Poor Purcell is thus cheated of great benefits: how can devout multitudes of admirers gather to do him honor and partake of his creative legacy when there is no specific date to serve as the focal point for all plans? True, a composer's music is no less great when heard or played on one date instead of another, but we have seen what new impetus was given to interest in Mozart's music on the occasion of his bicentenary in 1956. And we may shudder with anticipation at the inundation that will probably come in 1985 with the triple tercentenary of G. F. Handel, J. S. Bach, and Domenico Scarlatti. But then, there is still enough time to store up strength for that; and besides, who knows what the recording industry will be like then anyway?

Such reflections are inevitably prompted by the release of this Purcell commemorative set. Since the unfortunate man is without an official birth date, "Homage to Henry Purcell" (ostensibly on his 300th birthday) needs must be a stab in the dark. Though the law of averages would seem to favor 1959 as a more likely



Henry Purcell—from an oil by John Closterman

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Guide

occasion, certainly there is no harm in releasing it in 1958. In addition to its intrinsic value the set might well serve thus to remind other companies that there is yet time to find an excuse for giving Purcell some deserved attention.

The immediate impression of the set is just a little disappointing. The cover design is attractive and appropriate, centered around a pair of medallions of William and Mary, for whose court Purcell composed in his last years. But inside one finds only two discs, and the accompanying booklet is rather skimpy. True, the latter does contain a complete list of the pieces recorded, together with full vocal texts, and admirable notes by our own Philip L. Miller (known in these pages as P.L.M.). But it seems as if there might have been so much more, and is it being too greedy to consider this rather scanty homage from a company that could produce such a handsome release as its Respighi "Homage to the Past" set (VRS-466/7)?

One is next obliged to consider the individual selections. Many of them have been recorded on LP before, so this album is not completely a trail-blazer. Of the instrumental music, the Harpsichord Suite No. 6 is included in the set of Complete Suites on L'Oiseau-Lyre

(Continued on page 490)

## The Contents—

**Homage to Henry Purcell: An anthology comprising the most celebrated songs, sacred airs and concerted pieces for strings and harpsichord.** Alfred Deller (counter-tenor), April Cantelo (soprano), Maurice Bevan (baritone), George Malcolm, Walter Bergmann (harpsichord), Neville Mariner, Peter Gibbs, Granville Jones (violins), Desmond Dupré (viola da gamba). Bach Guild BG-570/1, \$9.96. (Contents listed categorically, with their locations on the records given numerically, the numbers indicating side and band.)

### Instrumental:

Harpsichord—*Hornpipe* (1,3); *Harpsichord Suite No. 6 in D minor* (1, 7); *Twelve Lessons from "Musick's Handmaid", Part II* (3, 4; 4,2). Ensemble—*Fantasia on a Ground in D for 3 Violins and Continuo* (1,1); *Sonata No. 9 in F, "Golden Sonata"* (2,2); *Pavan for Three Violins and Viola da Gamba* (2,4); *Sonata in G minor for Violin and Harpsichord* (3,2); *Fantasia Upon One Note in Five Parts in F* (4,5).

### Vocal:

From larger scores—*Music for a while*, from *Oedipus* (1,2); *Let the dreadful engines*, from *Don Quixote Part I* (1,5); *Thrice happy lovers*, from *The Fairy Queen* (1,6); *Fairest isle*, from *King Arthur* (3,1); *Sweeter than roses*, from *Pausanias* (3,3); *Crown the Altar*, from *Ode on Queen Mary's Birthday, 1693* (3,6); *I attempt from love's sickness to fly*, from *The Indian Queen* (4,1); *O lead me to some peaceful gloom*, from *Bonduca* (4,3); *What shall I do to show how much I love her*, from *Dioclesian* (4,4); *From rosy bowers*, from *Don Quixote Part III* (4,6).

Solo songs—*I love and I must* (1,4); *If music be the food of love* (2,1); *Tell me, some pitying angel* (*The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation*) (2,3); *Not all my torments* (2,5); *The fatal hour comes on apace* (3,5).

Duet—*Close thine eyes (Upon a Quiet Conscience)* (2,6).



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(OL-50011); the famous "Golden Sonata" is included in a group of Trio Sonatas on Period (SPL-572); the *Pavan* for four strings is on a Bartók Records disc (BRS-913); and the *Fantasia Upon One Note* is included in the complete Fantasias on Vanguard (VRS-240) and Decca Archive (ARC-3007), not to mention the defunct Allegro (AL-119). Of the songs, *Music for a While*, *I love and I must*, and *Sweeter than roses* all are included in a recital on Esoteric (ES-535), while the first of these was also on an old Renaissance disc (X-27).

Detailed comparisons would be impractical in this space, but a few are in order. The instrumental performances are excellent and quite equal to any competition. The vocal numbers, however, are not. Surprisingly enough it is the usually excellent Deller, singing two of the duplicated songs, who is at fault. His weakness here is that too often, consummate musician that he is, he sacrifices clarity and directness for an exploitation of the femininely sensuous quality of his voice. Yet he can still be highly effective

in other than the duplicated numbers, and he thoroughly redeems himself in the lovely *Fairest Isle*. The other two vocalists are highly competent, and Miss Cantelo has a prime opportunity to shine in the striking *Blessed Virgin's Expostulation*, a piece of secular "religious" music that is unusually dramatic and hardly ecclesiastical. The songs are accompanied, inexplicably, only by harpsichord, without the usual viola da gamba or cello doubling the bass line. Some of the most effective music in this set, however, is to be found in the instrumental pieces, especially the delightful "Twelve Lessons" for harpsichord. (Incidentally, No. 8 of these is an instrumental version of the lovely air on a ground *Here the deities approve*, from one of Purcell's odes, which is offered by Deller and an ensemble on Vanguard/Bach Guild BG-547).

Thus, in spite of some inconsistencies, this set does contain some fine material. But to regard it solely on the basis of individual selections is to miss the forest because of the trees. This album is plainly designed to give a cross-section of Purcell's music. On these terms, it makes two related and very serious omissions: it gives none of Purcell's choral music, secular or sacred, and it gives none whatsoever of his religious music. Thus we find included here none of the wonderful anthems, full or verse, that make up an impressive part of his total output. Accepting these limitations, therefore, we must regard the release as devoted primarily to Purcell's secular vocal and instrumental music, and on this basis it does prove to be a good representation. Vanguard/Bach Guild has, after all, given more Purcell to the LP catalogue than any other company, and here with they make another substantial contribution. In spite of the criticisms leveled above, then, this set is generally commendable. Perhaps the best characterization one may make of it is that it will appeal with equal success both to the uninitiate, who wants a solid and varied introduction to the composer, and to the veteran Purcell-lover who will find here a good deal of choice material that is not available elsewhere.

# Record Reviews

**T**HERE IS IN SOULS *a sympathy with sounds, and as the mind is pitched the ear is pleased with melting airs or martial, brisk or grave; some chord in unison with what we hear is touched within us, and the heart replies.*

—William Cowper

**ARNOLD:** *Tam O'Shanter Overture, Op. 51* (conducted by John Hollingsworth); *Beckus the Dandipratt Overture; Symphony No. 2, Op. 40*; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Arnold. Epic LC-3422, \$3.98.

▲THIS recording has many values. Arnold is one of the "best-seller" composers in England, and music from his studio is asked for long before it is produced. His output is thus of quantity—and mixed quality. Above all, it is extremely colored, fits the instruments like a skin-tight glove, sounds always healthy. He is best here, I think, in the short pieces. No one can do better with a clearly indexed musical story than this young man, although you must read the commentary first. Symphonic form, however, escapes him. The sectional review with repetitive use (changed only in terms of orchestration) is far from being a symphony. The orchestration also is overdone, and sometimes slips out of style. This is a recording to have fun with, but don't expect much from the major work. The playing is first-rate, the sound quite good. —A.C.

**J. S. BACH:** *Three Chorale Partitas—Christ, der du bist der helle Tag; O Gott, du frommer Gott; Sei gegrüsset, Jesu gutig*; Robert Noehren (on the Beckerath organ, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Cleveland, Ohio). Urania UR-8012, \$4.98.

▲NOEHREN is one of our most dedicated players, and he sets forth the lesser-heard treasures herein with matchless

grace and elegance. The attractiveness of the two early Böhm-like sets of variations (a *partita*, correctly speaking, refers to a single variation; plural, *partite*) and the mature *Sei gegrüsset*, plus the attractiveness of the first Beckerath built for America, make this beautifully recorded item altogether a joy. I realize that the taste for baroque sound is something like that for olives, and not everyone will like every stop—is that the Bärfeife? —but were I within range I couldn't wait to try this Hamburg-made outgrowth of the Schnitger tradition for myself. It is voiced to perfection, and clear whether tinkling or full organ. I can understand why Herman Adler (who produced this beautiful recording and also wrote the excellent annotations) and others consider this four-manual tracker the finest instrument built in modern times.

—J.B.L.

**Bach at Zwolle:** *Prelude and Fugue in D ("The Great"); Prelude and Fugue in C minor ("Arnstadt"); Prelude and Fugue in E flat ("St. Anne")*; E. Power Biggs (organ) on the Arp Schnitger Organ of 1720, St. Michael's Church, Zwolle, Holland. Columbia KL-5262, \$5.98.

▲PLAYED as if subtitled "The Fast", the *D Major* loses some of its identity, and the early "Arnstadt" fares little better—the combination of tossed-off tempo and shrill upper partials has the effect of making the fugue resemble a hoochy-koochy dance. This leaves the

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other side of the disc to justify the premium price, and in all fairness I must say that Biggs' treatment of the long and unwieldy "St. Anne" really does. The delicacy and clarity of his registration is a wonder. So to speak, he deftly wafts the great lady off the ground, thus accomplishing what I consider one of the really impossible feats. A close-up of Mr. B. at the famous old Schnitger clearly shows why the organists of yore had assistants to pull stops for them—these must be yanked at least six inches, and there is undoubtedly the original square pedal-board to boot! Columbia's recording is superb.

—J.B.L.

●  
**BEETHOVEN:** *Variations on a Theme by Diabelli, Op. 120*; Rudolf Serkin (piano). Columbia ML-5246, \$3.98.

Backhaus..... London LL-1182  
Shure..... Epic LC-3382

▲ADMIRERS of Rudolf Serkin's artistry will need no prodding to obtain this recording. They will know what to expect: technically brilliant, forceful, thoroughly musical performances of these variations which leave nothing to be desired. Others may find that Serkin's playing lacks that certain quality that distinguished Schnabel's reading—a sublimity and warmth, even humor. Serkin is of course completely on top of the music technically (Schnabel wasn't), and since the Schnabel recording has not yet been re-released on LP it is a matter of comparing the present disc with the other available versions. As I have tried to indicate, this is greatly a matter of personal preference. For my part, I would never say that the Serkin interpretation

is not good; it is as valid as any other. But I prefer the Leonard Shure recording, which is in essence much closer to Schnabel. My main disagreement with Serkin's version is that at times he seems to be striving for all-out virtuosity at the expense of the musical line. For example, in any of the faster variations that earthy humor is sometimes lost (Variation 22, which uses Leporello's aria at the beginning of *Don Giovanni*, is an instance). And when there are really touching moments in the score (the final variation—*Tempo di minuetto*—is the best example) Serkin only hints at the sublimity in the music. Regardless of these criticisms, Serkin's is a massive achievement, and one should at least hear it before deciding. The piano sound is of the concert hall variety, quite reverberant and not too intimate.

—I.K.

●  
**CHOPIN:** *Variations on a German Air* (posth.); *Nocturne in C Sharp minor* (posth.); *Tarantella in A flat, Op. 43*; *Rondo in E flat, Op. 16*; *Prelude in A flat* (posth.); *Prelude in C sharp minor, Op. 45*; *Barcarolle in F sharp, Op. 60*; *Variations Brillantes, Op. 12*; *Bolero, Op. 19*; George Banhalmi (piano). Vox PL-10370, \$4.98.

▲ONE glance at the contents will reveal that there is considerably more to this disc than the title, "Concert Cameos", indicates. All of these mostly seldom-heard works have been recorded at some time, but they are frequently not available or have not been issued in this country. It is good to have them all in one collection, even though the performance

is not quite the last word in Chopin playing. The interpretations are somewhat small-scaled and do not dig too deeply into the music; this is not serious with a work such as the *Variations on a German Air*, but with the caliber of music that one finds in the *Barcarolle*, for example, one requires much more interpretatively. Compare Lipatti's rendition on Columbia (ML-4721). The tempi, too, are rather four-square, and there is a notable lack of dynamic variety and shading, particularly in the more mature works such as the *Tarantella*. In spite of these faults, however, this recording will appeal to quite a number of Chopin lovers who have deplored the lack of availability of these works in the record catalogues. The sound of the piano is quite good. —I.K.

**GOUNOD:** *Symphony No. 2 in E flat*;  
**BIZET:** *Jeux d'Enfants*, Op. 22;  
Lamoureux Orchestra, Paris, conducted by Igor Markevitch. Decca DL-9982, \$3.98.

▲THAT Gounod wrote two symphonies for full orchestra is a fact one seldom encounters. Lovers of ballet probably will recall that his First was utilized by George Balanchine, but generally Gounod's few orchestral works (with the exception of the *Funeral March of a Marionette* which, through Alfred Hitchcock, has achieved a popularity all its own) lie neglected and forgotten. This is the first recording of his Second Symphony, and it holds considerable interest both in terms of the music itself and also with regard to the music Gounod was to write for another medium. The composer was thirty-seven when he had completed his First Symphony and began his Second; the music is to a certain extent derivative: the opening movement recalls Beethoven, the *Scherzo* reminds one of Mendelssohn. But throughout there is that underlying melodic inventiveness which was later to make "Faust" such a masterpiece. Markevitch conducts this strictly classical composition with great spirit—in the hands of a lesser musician the work could easily fail to sustain interest. As it is, this is a most persuasive performance, combining not only rhythmic vitality but also the

necessary lyrical quality. A fine discmate is the *Jeux d'Enfants*, which was originally written for piano, four hands, and later orchestrated in part by the composer and Kolpikoff. The five sections which were orchestrated by Bizet as the *Petite Suite* are given a performance of great precision and gusto. All told, this is an unusually enjoyable record, especially because of the Gounod. The sound is good.

—I.K.

**HANDEL-HARTY:** *Walter Music Suite*;  
*Suite from the Royal Fireworks Music*. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. Mercury MG-50158, \$3.98.

**HANDEL:** *Excerpts from the Water Music*; **TELEMANN:** *Tafelmusik, Third Suite*. Southwest German Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Orlando Zucca. Vox PL-10.650, \$4.98.

▲IN 1922 Sir Hamilton Harty published the Suite he had arranged from the *Water Music*, and Handel's score has never been the same since. True, there are now six different LP recordings of the full *Water Music* and, now that we have discovered how rich and varied the complete twenty-five movement collection actually is, it is a little passé to bother with anything less. But the record companies continue to suffer from some sort of Harty-itis. There is nothing really immoral, of course, in continuing to play the old Suite, but there is no reason for Mercury's annotator, Herbert Weinstock, to justify this with claims that (a) "no good reason exists for supposing that Handel wished all the twenty-five movements played consecutively", and (b) they "become a little monotonous" when this is done. Mr. Weinstock, himself a Handel biographer, certainly should know better. The Vox approach is a strange compromise, giving more than the old Suite but limiting itself to only nine sections, of which four are among the six Harty used. If Vox's advantage in selection thus has a slight edge over Mercury's, it has none in performance level: Zucca's reading is average, neither pedestrian nor inspired, and his tempi are occasionally strange—as when he takes the familiar

*Air* as if it were marked *alla marcia*. By contrast, Dorati leans over backward, if in an elegant fashion, to use every refinement of phrasing and shaping. Vox scores something of a victory in its coupling, the Third Suite of Telemann's *Tafelmusik*. Some may remember an earlier recording in a long-deleted Capitol disc (P-8111) in which this music was played in authentic fashion by a chamber ensemble. On this Vox disc it is done by a chamber orchestra, but this does not destroy the fresh appeal of the music, and Zucca shows up to better advantage here. Mercury's pairing of Harty's two Suites is a good idea, if no longer original. Also, Mercury's recorded sound is big and impressive, although Vox's is perhaps more appropriate to the music. —J.W.B.

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**HAYDN:** *Symphony No. 96 in D ("Miracle"); Symphony No. 104 in D ("London")*; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. London LL-1756, \$3.98.

(No. 96)  
Walter, N. Y. Phil., . . . . . Columbia ML-5059  
Van Beinum, Concertgebouw . . . . . London LL-854  
(No. 104)  
Wöldike, Vienna St. Op. Orch., Vanguard VRS-493  
Szell, Cleveland . . . . . Epic LC-3196

▲**OTHERS** have gone about these works with a greater forcefulness, but never with more finesse and sensitivity. All requisites for success—style, tempo, texture and depth—are present in ample measure. The Viennese are balm for the ears. In sum, this is warm, delightful music-making. The reproduction also is top-drawer. —A.K.

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**HAYDN:** *Symphony No. 100 in G ("Military"); Symphony No. 101 in D ("The Clock")*; London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. Mercury MG-50155, \$3.98.

("Military")  
Scherchen, Vienna Sym. Westminster XWN-18325  
Wöldike, Vienna St. Op. Orch., Vanguard VRS-492  
("Clock")  
Toscanini, N. Y. Phil., . . . . . RCA Camden CAL-375  
Toscanini, N. Y. Phil., . . . . . RCA Victor LM-1038  
Wöldike, Vienna St. Op. Orch., Vanguard VRS-492

▲**TO** Dorati's credit are the obvious strides that the Minneapolis forces have made toward becoming an instrument of discipline and tonal finesse. Of somewhat lesser proportions are his abilities as a Haydn interpreter. Both sym-

phonies are begun in highly promising fashion, with outstanding first movements. Texture, weight, and considerations of rhythm and phrasing are skillfully manipulated. Both second movements are slightly fast for maximal effect, particularly that of the "Military" Symphony. Dorati re-creates the third and final portions of this work better than those in the overside No. 101, whose minuet is on the stodgy side and whose closing *Vivace* lacks both momentum and vigor. The reproduction of both is of high quality.

—A.K.

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**KUHNAU:** *Four Biblical Sonatas*; Albert Fuller (harpsichord). Washington W-409, \$4.98.

▲**ON** this record we have four of the six *Biblical Sonatas* written by Johann Kuhnau (1660-1722), who is perhaps best known for having been the first composer to write pieces for solo keyboard that were not suites but sonatas. He was also J. S. Bach's predecessor at the Thomas-Kirche in Leipzig. These works are not, of course, sonatas in the classical sense; rather, each one consists of a series of movements written around a particular descriptive program. By way of further explanation, the titles of the present four sonatas are as follows: Sonata No. 1—*The Combat between David and Goliath*; Sonata No. 4—*Hezekiah, mortally ill and then restored*; Sonata No. 5—*Gideon, saviour of the people of Israel*; Sonata No. 6—*Jacob's death and burial*. It is amazing how Kuhnau manages to paint his scenes in terms of musical techniques; one might say that these sonatas are quaint, even simple at times in their efforts to portray serious events. But they do have great charm and are certainly unique in their own way. One can see Bach's *Capriccio on Departure of His Beloved Brother* as a direct link with this style of writing. Albert Fuller plays these picturesque works with intelligence and fine style. He has a good knowledge of the music of the period and its execution, and it shows in this recording. Since there are no tempo indications whatever in the music, the performer must use his own judgment; Fuller's choices of both



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tempo and registration are generally excellent. I certainly hope that he records the two remaining sonatas of this set, for taken all together this music represents an important historical document. The sound of the harpsichord is dull until the highs are boosted either through compensation or treble control. —L.K.

*Vespers*, which contrasts not too favorably with a performance on *Angel*, conducted by Carl Forster and featuring Erna Berger. Though the critical may detect some signs of the years in Berger's voice, she sings admirably, and the choral work is more satisfactory than in this presentation. Vox is to be commended for giving the timings of the two sides along with the introductory notes and texts. —P.L.M.

**MOZART:** *Miserol o sogno...* *Aura, che intorno spiri, K. 431;* *Si mostra la sorte, K. 209;* *Se al labbro mio non credi...* *Il cor dolentis, K. 295;* *Con ossequio, con rispetto, K. 210;* *Per pieta, non ricercate, K. 420;* *Va, dal furor portata, K. 21;* *Or che il dover...* *Tali e colanti, K. 36;* Helmut Krebs (tenor) with Pro Musica Orchestra of Munich conducted by Kurt Redel. Westminster XWN-18663. \$4.98.

▲KREBS is curiously disappointing in these concert arias. Whether it is the Italian language that bothers this usually excellent German lyric tenor, or whether he was simply not in good voice when the recording was made, I found the recital rather tedious going. The quality of the tone is consistently nasal and unvital. Actually there is variety enough in the music to sustain interest throughout, but I am afraid when it is sung in this way the listener's mind is apt to wander.

—P.L.M.

**MOZART:** *Mass in C*, K. 317 ("Coronation"); *Vesperae solennes de Confessore*, K. 339; Wilma Lipp (soprano); Christa Ludwig (contralto); Murray Dickie (tenor); Peter Bender (basso); Vienna Oratorio Choir and Pro Musica Symphony, conducted by Jascha Horenstein. Vox PL-10.260, \$4.98.

▲WITHIN recent months we have had two recordings of the *Coronation Mass* and one of the *Vespers*. Reviewing the Moralt performance of the former in the February issue, I stated my preference for the slightly earlier one by Markevitch, though the fact that Moralt uses boy soloists sets his recording aside as something a little special. The latest addition to the lists hardly alters the verdict, for Horenstein's reading is rather restless and coarse in sound. The same is true of the

**MOZART:** *Symphonies*—No. 32 in G, K. 318; No. 35 in D, K. 385 ("Haffner"); No. 36 in C, K. 425 ("Linz"); Pro Musica Symphony of Vienna conducted by Jonel Perlea. Vox PL-10-140, \$4.98.

(K. 318)		
Lehmann, Bamberg	Decca DL-9766	
Leinsdorf, London Phil.	Westminster XWN-18216	
(K. 385)		
Walter, N. Y. Phil.	Columbia ML-4693	
Toscanini, NBC	RCA Victor LM-1038	
(K. 425)		
Reiner, Chicago	RCA Victor LM-6035	
Walter, Col. Sym	Columbia DSL-2249	

Walter, Columbia 224-225. Columbia 224-225.

▲THOUGH evincing neither elegance nor penetration to any great extent, Perlea's skillfully contoured and warmly vigorous accounts qualify for a high place. Vox's sound is perhaps *too* live and broad for this literature. The repose of the second movements is not fully achieved. —A.K.

**POWELL:** *Trio for Piano, Violin and Cello; Divertimento for Violin and Harp; Divertimento for Five Winds*; Helura Trio (Lucille Burnham, piano; Herbert Sorkin, violin; Ray Schweitzer, cello); Herbert Sorkin (violin) and Margaret Ross (harp); Fairfield Wind Ensemble (Murray Karpilovsky, trumpet; Thomas Parsley, flute; Harry Shulman, oboe; David Weber, clarinet; Elias Carmen, bassoon). Composers Recording CRI-121, \$4.98.

▲SOME composers use only the rule of the theoretical thumb; others concern themselves with art while they draw on technical formulations. Mel Powell is of the latter class. He is a neoclassicist, neither dry nor academic. His music is elegant, seriously refined, but he does not fully ride on his creative horse; he swings side-saddle at times and propels his music with energy that is titillating. Since expressiveness and design are the co-efficients that make classical music great,

art, Powell's similar premises make him a candidate for the class of important composers. There are some slips, some points in the music with which this reviewer could disagree. These are minor to the more important total of intelligent music-making. Credit must be given for the distinguishing use of color. A duo for violin and harp is rare; hearing the combination makes one realize how difficult it is to combine the piano with a string instrument and obtain solid balance. And the replacement of the horn by a trumpet in the woodwind quintet is a stroke of genius. But let's keep our hats firmly on until more proof is at hand. Meanwhile Powell offers the challenge of expert music which does not play to the gallery, refuses to romanticize or picturize, and is therefore worthy of our attention. The engineering is excellent. —A.C.

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**PROKOFIEV:** *Romeo and Juliet* (excerpts); Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. RCA Victor LM-2110, \$4.98.

Rozhdestvensky.....Westminster set 2206

▲THE qualities that made the old BSO presentation of the Suite No. 2 so immediate in its poignance and appeal are for the most part present here. Munch, of course, offers far more of the ballet—from Suite No. 1, Scenes No. 2 (early morning in Verona); No. 5 (*Masques*); and No. 7 (Death of Tybalt); from Suite No. 2, everything except No. 6 (Dance of the Maids from Antilles); from Suite No. 3, Morning Dance (No. 2), *Aubade* (No. 5), and Juliet's Death (No. 6). Munch is very much alive to the dramatic elements in the music, and brings them into sharp perspective. In this respect the Death of Friar Laurence, *Masques*, Juliet the Little Girl, and Juliet's Death are particularly rewarding. The one element not fully realized here, one that Koussevitzky caught with such disarming subtlety, is an almost haunting sense of stillness and intimacy appropriate in Romeo and Juliet's Parting and Romeo at Juliet's Grave. But this is a minor defect in an otherwise highly laudable concept. For that matter, it might very well be due not to the conductor but to the



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less-than-ideal reproduction in which the orchestral tuttis (especially on side one) tend toward a rasping coarseness. The recording seems to respond best to the pre-New Orthophonic RCA Victor curve.

—A.K.

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**REGER:** *Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Mozart, Op. 132; MOZART: Serenade No. 6 in D, K. 239 ("Serenata Notturna")*; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. Decca DL-9979, \$3.98.

Van Beinum(Reger) ..... Decca DL-9565  
Klemperer(Mozart) ..... Angel 35401

▲STRANGELY, in this time of multiduplications, there is only one other version of the massive *Mozart Variations* available, and that one was originally recorded about ten years ago. Perhaps this does not speak too well for the popularity of the work, but then there has always been a great deal of controversy concerning the merits of Reger's music. Whether or not one likes this particular piece, one must admit that it is most skillfully constructed and can sound extremely impressive in a good performance. Karl Böhm, who recorded the work once before, many years ago, is a compelling and sensitive interpreter; his handling of the orchestra and choice of tempi (with the sole exception of, in my opinion, a rather slow treatment of the theme itself) are admirable. The sound is good if not spectacular, for the climaxes are not so full and rich as they ought to be. The delightful *Serenata Notturna* comes as a pleasant bonus, although musically one may wonder what the two have in common. Böhm conducts with great charm in a performance that is a little more earthbound than the elegant Klemperer interpretation. The solo instruments are recorded quite close up, but otherwise the sound is satisfactory. Very good program notes by Shirley Fleming. —I.K.

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**RESPIGHI:** *Antique Dances and Airs, Suites Nos. 1, 2 & 3*; Rome Symphony Orchestra conducted by Franco Ferrara. Victor LM-2179, \$4.98.

Litschauer ..... Vanguard 466  
▲AT his best Respighi is unequaled, and these three suites—very free transcrip-

tions of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century tunes—have such charm that it is no effort to listen to them over and over again. Franco Ferrara, an immensely gifted young conductor who has spent most of his career thus far in Italy, directs the Rome Symphony with an *élan* that defies description. His interpretation not only has tremendous atmosphere but also includes a wonderful feeling for style. Another version of all three suites is available on Vanguard, and that rendition, too, is good; Ferrara's terrific enthusiasm (compare the two interpretations of the *Danza Rustica* from the second suite) and greater sensitivity make his performance, in my opinion, the preferred interpretation by a narrow margin. The sound in the Victor recording is less reverberant than that in the Vanguard, causing the music to become more chamberlike and less symphonic in nature. Highly recommended. —I.K.

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**SCHMITT:** *Une semaine du petit elfe Ferme-l'Oeil, Op. 59; Trois Rapsodies, Op. 53*; Robert and Gaby Casadesus (pianos). Columbia ML-5259, \$3.98.

▲THESE are thoroughly delightful performances of charming works by the contemporary Frenchman, Florent Schmitt. The composer, born in 1870, studied with Massenet and Fauré, then won the Grand Prix de Rome. But he quickly became known as a kind of *enfant terrible*, for he balked at the conformity that was expected of him. Of his compositions, perhaps the two best known are the Quintet in B minor and the ballet, *La Tragédie de Salomé*. The works recorded here—*Une semaine du petit elfe Ferme-l'Oeil*, which was written in 1912 for piano, four hands, and based on a fairy tale by Hans Christian Anderson, and the *Rapsodies* for two pianos, which date from 1903 and 1904—are both first recordings. They are charming pieces full of wit and humor, and they receive the most brilliant performances imaginable. Highly recommended. —I.K.

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**STAMITZ:** *Orchestral Trio No. 2 in A, Op. 1; Concerto in C for Oboe, Strings, and Continuo; Concerto in B flat for*

*Clarinet, Strings, and Continuo; Sinfonia à 8 in D;* Hermann Töttcher (oboe); Jost Michaels (clarinet); Ingrid Heiler (harpsichord); Münchener Kammerorchester conducted by Carl Gorvin. Decca Archive ARC-3092, \$5.95.

▲ DEVOTED to four representative samples of Johann Stamitz' massive orchestral output, this recording concentrates on the historical significance of the Mannheim school. Basically, this was a changing concept of the orchestra and orchestral playing; it was the brilliance of the Mannheim orchestra which so influenced Mozart when he visited the city in 1777. Stamitz (1717-1757) was partly responsible for the development of this school of performance. The music here is of a very high level, and is beautifully performed. Especially outstanding, in my opinion, are the oboe concerto (with Hermann Töttcher, one of the most fabulous oboists in the world, as the soloist) and the clarinet concerto, which is one of the first solo concertos written for that instrument. The sound is first-rate. —I.K.

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**STRAVINSKY:** *The Rite of Spring;* The Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Igor Markevitch. Angel 35549, \$4.98 and \$3.98.

Stravinsky.....Columbia ML-4882  
Monteux.....Victor LM-2085  
Fricsay.....Decca DL-9781

▲ ALTHOUGH this is listed as a new release on Angel, the same performance was released in the winter of 1954 by Victor as LHMV-1. That disc, of course, is no longer available, the rights having reverted to EMI, and so, because of changes in contracts and so forth, this version is once again issued on the American market and, I might add, to the great benefit of the record buyer. This is a tense, slightly dry, tremendously exciting interpretation, which has more impact than almost any other version currently available. Only one other reading surpassed it, and that was the older Monteux performance with the Boston Symphony, unfortunately now deleted. Soundwise, far from showing its age, this recording ranks with the best discs issued today. —I.K.

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**TANEIEV:** *Piano Trio in D major, Op. 22;* **ALIABEV:** *Piano Quintet in E flat;* Lev Oborin (piano), David Oistrakh (violin), Sviatoslav Knushevitsky (cello); Emil Gilels (piano), Beethoven Quartet. Westminster XWN-18679, \$4.98.

▲ THE superb performance of the Taneiev—a work practically unknown to the western musical world, makes this one of the most outstanding chamber music releases of the year. The recording also serves to make known a new cellist, who parallels his colleagues here in technique and musical poetry. One hopes this team will foregather again. It would be exciting to consider their performances of the Tchaikovsky and Arensky trios. Taneiev's music is of crystalline mastery. It contains the warmth and grace of Mozart, has a particular kind of formal whimsy when it silhouettes the scherzo in variational lighting. Though the composer could not accept the romantics, especially those who imitated the chromatic gymnastics of Wagner, his music has its romantic hallmarks. But these

are blended into the classical design. The present performers proportion their playing accordingly. And it is this point of moderation that makes the recording exhilarating. No emotional shivers will occur in listening to the Alabev. The credo of this unknown composer is simply chaste classicism. But the sounds are fluent and fluid and the performance follows suit. It is a good foil to the major work overside, and illustrates the truism that the LP catalogue still has quite a few gaps to be filled. —A.C.

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Symphony No. 2 in C minor, Op. 17 ("Little Russian")*;

**MUSSORGSKY:** *A Night on Bald Mountain*; Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Carlo Maria Giulini. Angel 35463, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

Beecham, Royal Phil. .... Columbia ML-4872

▲THE swiftness of tempi (particularly in the final movement) and also the strongly compelling dramatic emphasis of this reading suggest that Giulini is trying (perhaps too hard) to compensate

for the compositional immaturities of the score. The Beecham interpretation is more leisurely and places projective stress more upon programmatic and ethnic elements. Between the two, I lean toward Giulini's, which is much livelier listening. And the accompanying *Night On Bald Mountain* is a hair-raiser. The composer requested an *allegro feroce*; here he really got one. The Philharmonia is, as ever, a joy to hear in Angel's sound. —A.K.

**VAUGHAN WILLIAMS:** *Serenade to Music; Fantasia on Greensleeves; Towards the Unknown Regions; The Wasps—Overture*; Elsie Morison (soprano); Marjorie Thomas (contralto); Duncan Robinson (tenor); Trevor Anthony (basso); with chorus and London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. Angel 35564, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

▲THE *Serenade to Music* was composed in honor of Sir Henry J. Wood's jubilee, October 5th, 1938. It is a particularly graceful tribute, not only to the noted

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Suite No. 3 in G, Op. 55*; Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas Scherman. Columbia ML-5256, \$3.98.

Boult ..... London LL-1295

▲THIS, of course, is the suite which contains as a last movement the balletic *Theme and Variations* so often heard separately. There are at present only two available recordings, including this version and the Boult, and I cannot help feeling that, although competent, neither of these represents the ideal performance. The main difficulty seems to be one of style so far as the Little Orchestra So-

ciety's recording is concerned; the playing is impressive, the conducting properly vigorous, and yet, temperamentally, something is missing. Perhaps it is the Tchaikovskyan sweep of the strings, or the feeling of melancholy in a certain phrase, or even a certain epic grandeur in climaxes. It is difficult to pinpoint, but what this recording lacks is the combination of qualities which made Furtwängler's *Pathétique* on shellac such an unforgettable experience. Soundwise, this issue is good, and in regard to performance this disc may be considered an example of this orchestra's best playing. —I.K.



Igor Youskevitch and the corps of the Ballet Theatre in a scene from Balanchine's "Theme and Variations"

conductor but also to the sixteen vocal soloists who had been most actively associated with him. There were solo bits designated for all the singers, who came together for the première. The composer's note at the head of the score is touching: "For subsequent performances of this work, when the above singers (indicated by their initials in the score) may not be available, other singers will have to take their places. Four soloists will be sufficient, or all the solo parts may be sung in chorus." A recording by the original sixteen singers conducted by Wood is now a cherished collectors' item. Now here is one of the "subsequent performances" foreseen by Vaughan Williams, with four soloists, chorus, and orchestra. The text is the famous passage from *The Merchant of Venice*: "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank". Perhaps no more need be said of the score than that the composer has caught the magic of this poetry; and that his musical inspiration is as heart-warming as his dedication. The soloists are effective in their parts, and failing the original sixteen the chorus is altogether right.

The other vocal number is all choral, a setting of Walt Whitman. It is said to have been the first piece of Vaughan Williams that made a really profound impression (when it was new, in 1907); surely it was prophetic of the great things to come. The *Fantasia on Greensleeves* is given a quiet, meditative performance, and the delightfully British overture to Aristophanes' *The Wasps* is played with lusty spirit.

—P.L.M.

VERDI: "La Forza del Destino" Overture; "Nabucco" Overture; "I Vespri Siciliani" Overture; "La Traviata": Preludes to Acts I and III; London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. Mercury MG-50156, \$3.98.

("Forza," "I Vespri")  
Toscanini.....Victor LM-6041  
("Nabucco").....Angel 35012  
Galliera.....Camden 309  
("Traviata").....Camden 309

▲IN general these are very good performances, although not on the level of Toscanini's fabulous interpretations of this music. Unfortunately, with the

possible exception of the Overture to "La Forza del Destino", most of Toscanini's Verdi excerpts have to be listened to indulgently from the point of view of recording. In this respect the new Mercury disc is far superior. Dorati's tempi are mostly beyond criticism, and his sensitivity, particularly in the "Traviata" Preludes, is admirable. I have but one minor criticism regarding the "Forza" Overture—the fanfare-like beginning Dorati takes, for my taste, at much too fast a tempo. Here, too, the brass and wood-wind chords blare forth most raucously in Mercury's close-up recording of the orchestra. Otherwise this is a fine recording.

—I.K.

VIVALDI: Four Concerti for Winds and Orchestra (in C, P. 74, for two oboes, two clarinets, and orchestra; in F, P. 319, for two oboes, two horns, bassoon, violin, and orchestra; in C, P. 85, for two oboes and orchestra; in G minor, Op. 10, "La Notte", P. 342, for flute, bassoon, and orchestra). Soloists; the Milan Chamber Orchestra conducted by Newell Jenkins. Washington WR-404, \$4.98.

VIVALDI: Four Concerti for Winds, Strings, and Orchestra (in B flat, P. 368, for Violin and two orchestras; in C, P. 87, for two flutes, oboe, English horn, two trumpets, violin, two violas, two harpsichords, and orchestra; in C, P. 54, for two flutes, two oboes, bassoon, two violins and orchestra; in F, P. 273, for two oboes, bassoon, two horns, violin, and orchestra). Same artists. Washington WR-406, \$4.98.

▲IT may well turn out that the twentieth-century equivalent of the Flying Dutchman is the conductor who is doomed to record all the concerti the inexhaustible Vivaldi ever wrote—a task to keep anyone busy for several eternities. Whether or not the admirable and energetic Jenkins has been marked out for this fate is moot at this point, but if so he has herewith nobly spread his sails to the winds in more than a punning sense. In an earlier release for Period (SPL-733) he gave us some of Vivaldi's solo concerti for such unlikely instruments as mandolin and



Jenkins: "precision and excellent taste"

piccolo, and these served to illustrate the composer's interest in exploiting every imaginable application of the solo concerto form. But with the present discs Jenkins reveals a far more important, if less familiar, aspect of Vivaldi's work, and one which should be at once a long-awaited pleasure to patient devotees and a revelation to the uninitiated. This aspect is nothing less than Vivaldi's striking and inventive experimentation with a wide variety of combinations of instrumental sonorities *within* the concerto grosso form. Once digested, these works reveal Vivaldi as the true foundation for Bach's *Brandenburg Concerti*, which are the culmination of Vivaldi's daring extensions of the old concerto

grosso. It is thus in these pioneering expansions of the concerto that we can trace a growth of confidence and experience during the eighteenth century in the handling of winds with strings. It might be well to note that in two of these concerti modern instruments are used, almost anachronistically, to replace some obsolete ones. In the P. 87, the English horn plays the part written for an undetermined member of the shawm family. More drastic is the use of clarinets—which were only beginning to be developed in the early eighteenth century—to serve as the single reed instruments against the double reed oboes; the notes are annoyingly vague about this. Of the eight works three (P. 342, P. 87, P. 273) have been recorded twice before and one (P. 85) once before. Space does not permit detailed comparisons, and suffice it to say that these performances will easily stand any test of competition. The soloists are all excellent (although the violinist in P. 368 is perhaps not completely up to the demands of the taxing part), and Jenkins leads with his usual precision and excellent taste. The recording quality is excellent. With such records as this among its earliest issues, the new Washington label is establishing itself as one worth watching. —J.W.B.

**VIVALDI:** *Sonata in A minor for Flute, Bassoon, and Harpsichord; Concerto in G minor for Flute, Oboe, and Bassoon;*  
**TELEMANN:** *Partita in B flat for Oboe, Bassoon, and Harpsichord; Trio Sonata in C minor for Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, and Harpsichord; Fantasias in D minor and B minor for Solo Flute;* Samuel Baron (flute); Jerome Roth (Oboe); Bernard Garfield (bassoon); Albert Fuller (harpsichord). Washington WR-402, \$4.98.

▲ON the whole this is an extremely enjoyable recording. The music, most of which is unavailable elsewhere, is delightful, particularly so the Telemann Trio Sonata in C minor and the Vivaldi Concerto in G minor. Interesting also are the two Fantasias for solo flute by the former. The performances are with one exception quite good, the unsatisfactory piece being

the Vivaldi Sonata in A minor, which here receives a completely turgid and lifeless reading. In this work also the harpsichord has been recorded too distantly, with the resulting effect of a "hole in the middle" between the higher voice of the flute and the lower parts of the bassoon and continuo. The artists are all fine instrumentalists (Bernard Garfield is first bassoonist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, and all three woodwind players are members of the New York Woodwind Quintet), but their performances in general are based too closely on what they see on the printed page. More flexibility and improvisation is required to make this music come properly to life; the performers were expected, for example, to ornament beyond what is indicated in the music—this was an established practice. In addition, the flute

playing of Mr. Baron could benefit greatly, as for example in the Fantasias, from more color and variety in tone and tempi. Nevertheless, this recording will give considerable pleasure, and with the reservations noted above is recommended particularly for the musical content. Sonically, the issue is satisfactory, but the high end needs boosting to avoid dull tone quality. —I.K.

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**WAGNER:** *Prelude and Liebestod* ("Tristan und Isolde"); *Overtures* to "Die Meistersinger" and "Tannhäuser"; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. Angel 35482, \$3.98 & \$4.98.

▲FOR those who were weaned on the overwhelming Stokowski version of the "Tannhäuser" Overture, Karajan's relative lack of urgency may be a disappointment. The score calls for a tremendous climax of the *Pilgrims' Hymn*, with a soaring violin accompaniment. In this performance the mood is a combination of solemn dignity and mysticism which, although perfect for later works like "Parsifal", somehow underplay the very obvious excitement and assertiveness of this youthful music. A bit of this lethargy extends to the "Meistersinger" Prelude. However, things begin to happen on side two—things that make this disc an absolute "must" for Wagner lovers. After an increasingly lustrous "Tristan" Prelude, Karajan delivers an incredibly sumptuous *Liebestod*. Instead of "attacking" chords, he squeezes out the sound in a manner that would make even a stone weep. Karajan has always seemed to possess a natural reserve which prevents him from becoming emotionally involved with what he conducts. This performance is an exception. —D.H.M.

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**WIDOR:** *Symphony No. 6, Op. 42: Allegro; Salve Regina; DUPRÉ: Prelude and Fugue in G Minor, Op. 7; Triptyque, Op. 51.* Marcel Dupré (organ of St. Thomas Church, New York City). Mercury MG-50169, \$4.98.

▲THE lush and searing majesty of the *Allegro* from Widor's Sixth does not run away with M. Dupré—he controls it;

the diffuse mystery of the *Salve Regina* (later included in the Second) does not escape him—he elicits it. But few things are more tantalizing than just a taste of something so good. To me, this should have been either a whole symphony of Widor or a full program of Dupré; for promotional purposes, two names are not necessarily better than one. And although the *G minor* is the best known and perhaps the most ingenuous of the Preludes and Fugues, I am campaigning for a complete set, plus the Communion Antiphons and Stations of the Cross before Mercury goes much further with this series. For Dupré playing Dupré is simply magic, and the record companies do not seem to realize that he has a substantial place as a composer. He was, indeed, the true link between Widor and Vierne and Messiaen and Langlais in the chain of French organ composers. Top engineering. —J.B.L.

**Italian Opera Intermezzos:** Catalani: "Loreley"—Dance of the Water Nymphs; "La Wally"—Preludes to Acts III & IV; Zandonai: "Giulietta e Romeo"—Intermezzo; Wolf-Ferrari: "I Gioielli della Madonna"—Intermezzo; "I Quattro Rusteghi"—Intermezzo; "Il Segreto di Susanna"—Overture; Pick-Mangiagalli: "Notturno Romantico"—Waltz; Mascagni: "Guglielmo Ratcliff"—Sogno; "Le Maschere"—Overture; Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. Angel 35483, \$3.98 & \$4.98. ("Loreley"; "La Wally": Prelude, Act IV) Toscanini.....Victor LM-6026 ("Guglielmo Ratcliff"; "Le Maschere") Gavazzeni.....London LL-1600

▲THIS is really a splendid record, for the performances are lively where necessary, well paced, and sensitive. Some of this music is overly familiar, but even here Galliera's approach seems fresh. The "Secret of Susanna" Overture, for instance, is played with a bounce that I haven't heard since Toscanini's acoustic recording of 1921. Two Catalani pieces, also recorded by Toscanini, are more haunting, more atmospheric than Galliera brings out, but on the whole this issue is most successful and will afford a great deal of listening pleasure. The sound is good, albeit a trifle shrill.—I.K.

# Five ladies

**The Art of Galli-Curci:** *Air and Variations* (Proch); *The Last Rose of Summer* (Moore); "Traviata"—Ah, fors' è lui; *Sempre libera*; *Addio del passato* (Verdi); "Roméo et Juliette"—Valse (Gounod); "Les Pêcheurs de Perles"—Comme autrefois (Bizet); Lo, here the gentle lark (Bishop); *Home, sweet Home* (Bishop); "Dinorah"—Ombrà leggiera (Meyerbeer); *My Old Kentucky Home* (Foster); *La Capinera* (Benedict); "Rigoletto"—Caro nome (Verdi); Amelita Galli-Curci (soprano). RCA Camden CAL-410, \$1.98.

▲GALLI-CURCI'S sensational surprise debut in Chicago on November 18th, 1916, was one of the events of modern operatic history. The Victor Company was on the spot, for it is said her recording contract was signed before her first appearance, and she was one of a group of remarkably phonogenic artists whose careers on the stage were abetted by their activities in the studios. Galli-Curci's was not a long career—not much more than a good decade—yet she was able to make a lasting reputation as one of the top-flight coloraturas of history, and she left plenty of excellent records to account for that reputation. It is noteworthy that Galli-Curci was largely self-taught as a singer, though her training as a pianist gave her a broad musical background. This Camden selection is taken mostly from her early years, 1917-21, though there are two electrically recorded songs—*Home, Sweet Home* and *My Old Kentucky Home*—from 1928. The brilliance of her singing is perhaps best demonstrated by the Proch *Variations*, the *Shadow Song* from "Dinorah", and *Sempre libera*. It was not the dazzling brilliance of a Tetrazzini, but something more intimate, somehow more subjective. The voice quality was soft and caressing where Tetrazzini's was spectacular. She could sing lyrically, too, as witness the "Pearl Fishers" aria, though for me she was not quite simple enough in the home songs. Perhaps what impressed people most was the consum-

mate ease with which she did everything. With so many charms, so much musical grace and style, there was no need to touch emotional depths. —P.L.M.

## None but the Lonely Heart—Jennie Tourel Sings Russian Love Songs:

*None but the Lonely Heart; So Soon Forgotten; At the Ball; When Spring Was in the Air* (Tchaikovsky); *Over the Steppe; All Along the Highway* (Gretchaninoff); *Under the Mask* (Bakirev); *The Soldier's Bride; In the Silence of the Night; O Cease thy Singing, Maiden Fair* (Rachmaninoff); *Love Song; Look, Darling Girls; Romance* (Dargomijsky); *Vain Temptation; Doubt* (Glinka); *Gayer than the Lark* (Rimsky-Korsakov); Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) and Brooks Smith (piano), with George Ricci (cello obbligato). Decca DL-9981, \$3.98.

▲FEW of our outstanding artists will go unappreciated in future epochs, thanks to the phonograph. Perhaps the most notable exception is Miss Tourel, whose altogether meager representation on LP is a scandal without parallel in a day when singers of far less ability are given opportunities to record the most important works in the repertory. Now that Decca has had the belated good sense to sign her, perhaps she will be able to make up for lost time within the limits of her voice, which is not so sizable as once it was. Her musicianship, however, is as impeccable as ever, and she summons it with great effectiveness in this recital of sentimental trifles. Gretchaninoff's *Over the Steppe* she had done once before on Columbia ML-2198; as far as I know she has not recorded any of the other songs previously. Her next assignment will be, I hope, a more formidable program musically, but even these encores reveal her rare talent for penetrating a genre—any genre. Smith's accompaniments are all right; Ricci's are rather maudlin and needlessly obtrusive. —J.L.

**Song Recital:** *Die Forelle; Auf dem Wasser zu singen; Seligkeit; Heideröslein* (Schubert); *Wohin mit der Freud?; Wiegenlied; Die Kleine; Nachgruss* (Wolf); *Die Stern; Einerlei*;

*Schlechtes Wetter* (Strauss); *Variations on Carl Maria von Weber's Schlaf Herzessöhnchen* (Nicolai); *Chansons de Ronsard* (Milhaud); *Gätsli* (Swiss folksong); *When love is kind* (English folksong); *Canto delle Risaioli* (Italian folksong); *Ans clair de la lune* (French folksong); *z'Lauterbach* (German folksong); Rita Streich (soprano) and Erik Werba (piano). Decca DL-9972, \$3.98.

▲IT is not too usual for so brilliant a coloratura singer as Miss Streich has more than once proved herself to excel in the lyrical moods of lieder. As it hap-

pens, Streich's two distinguished teachers were among the exceptions, and their pupil seems to have learned well from them. Maria Ivogün had a warm soprano voice laden with charm, and Erna Berger is well remembered for her musicianly song interpretations. There are moments of loveliness in this recital quite worthy of these two artists, notably in the unfamiliar little Wolf songs. There are also moments of self-consciousness, as in some of the Schubert, to show that Streich has still some things to learn. And at times there is an odd little quaver in the tone. The Milhaud cycle herewith

## Pinza's farewell—and his successor's debut

**MOZART:** "Don Giovanni"—*Madamina; Mentre ti lascio, o figlia*, K. 513; "Nozze di Figaro"—*Se vuol ballare; Aprete un po' quegl' occhi*; "Don Giovanni"—*Deh vieni alla finestra*; **PUCCINI:** "Bohème"—*Vecchia zimarra*; **ROSSINI:** "Il Barbiere di Siviglia"—*La calunnia*; **MUSSORGSKY:** "Boris Godunov"—*Ho il poter supremo*; **VERDI:** "Simon Boccanegra"—*Il lacerato spirto*; **HA-LÉVY:** "La Juive"—*Si la rigeur et la vengeance*; Ezio Pinza (basso) with orchestras conducted by Bruno Walter, Fausto Cleva, Emil Cooper, etc. Columbia ML-5239. \$3.98.

▲TAKEN together with the recent Camden recital, this disc covers the lamented basso's American career from his first season up to about the time when he left the Metropolitan. Between the two there is some duplication, but even here the contrast afforded by the earlier and the later Pinza is of some interest. Whereas in the Camden program the voice was fresher and the style a bit more intense, here the instrument is still a noble one and the art has somewhat deepened. As for repertory, some of his very best roles are represented. We are also given a chance to judge the Leporello he never had time to sing for us and the Don Basilio he used to enjoy so thoroughly. The "Simon Boccanegra" is a particularly treasurable souvenir of the first Metropolitan performance of that fine opera, and

the "Juive" is certainly one of Pinza's best ventures into French. —P.L.M.

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**Presenting Tozzi:** "Don Carlos"—*Ella giammai m'amo* (Verdi); "Don Giovanni"—*Deh, vieni alla finestra* (Mozart); "Simon Boccanegra"—*Il lacerato spirto*; "I Vespri Siciliani"—*O tu Palermo*; "Ernani"—*Infelice* (Verdi); "Nozze di Figaro"—*Non piu andrai; Se vuol ballare* (Mozart); "Nabucco"—*Tu sul labbro de' veggenti* (Verdi); "Don Giovanni"—*Madamina, il catalogo* (Mozart); Giorgio Tozzi (basso) with the Rome Opera House Orchestra conducted by Jean Morel. RCA Victor LM-2188, \$4.98.

▲AN American for all his Italian name, Giorgio Tozzi has come to general notice rather slowly but very surely. He joined the Metropolitan in 1954, after singing publicly here and abroad for several seasons. Today there is good reason to look upon him as *the* operatic basso of the time. Others have made their marks by means of more glamorous personalities or more striking dramatic abilities, but for sheer vocal beauty and musical maturity he is well out in front. Such a program as this, made up of so many familiar arias, can be a trial for the listener, but given such singing it becomes rich and fresh. The recital is a lesson in style as well as an exhibition of first-rate vocalism.

—P.L.M.

makes its third appearance on records, and I am inclined to prefer this version to those that have gone before. Though the songs were composed for voice and orchestra, they seem to me to benefit by the use of the piano. The picture is thus less crowded. I have complained before of the impossibility of any singer's making the words plain in these settings; Miss Streich's French may be less perfect than that of Miss Pons or Miss Micheau, but I don't find that this means additional loss, and the voice is here quite charming. The English of *When Love is Kind* is good and clear, though the singing is a little cautious. *Gzätzli* and *z'Lauterbach* remind us of an unforgettable older disc made by Ivogün, which must still stand as definitive. Perhaps what is most wanting on the second side of this disc is a dash or two of archness.

—P.L.M.

**GLUCK:** "Alceste"—*Divinités du Styx*; **WEBER:** "Oberon"—*Ozean, du Ungeheuer*; **VERDI:** "Ernani"—*Ernani involami*; **PONCHIELLI:** "La Gioconda"—*Suicidio*; **TCHAIKOVSKY:** "Jeanne d'Arc"—*Adieu, forêts*; **MASSENET:** "Hérodiade"—*Il est doux, il est bon*; **DEBUSSY:** "L'Enfant Prodigue"—*Air de Lia*; **MENOTTI:** "The Consul"—*To this we've come*; Eileen Farrell (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Thomas Schippers. Angel 35589, \$4.98 and \$3.98.

IT is no news that Eileen Farrell's voice is among the great ones of the last generation or two. For sheer glory of sound there are not many recorded recitals to compare with this one. More than that, the soprano is technically accomplished and manages even the florid passages of the "Ernani" number with neatness and assurance. And this right after a vocally sumptuous performance of the "Oberon"! Rather unexpectedly, I find her most interesting in the Tchaikovsky and Debussy arias. The vocal line in *Adieu, forêts* is extraordinarily pure, and there is some real dramatic fire in the *Air de Lia*. The scene from "The Consul", too, is strongly conceived, but here strangely enough the words don't come out as clearly as they

should. *Divinités du Styx* is tonally fine but somehow lacking in classic breadth, and like so many singers she sings the "Ernani" cavatina fast enough to make it a bit frivolous. In a word, there is nothing in this recital that one would call less than good, and yet there are a number of arias one does not find exciting.

—P.L.M.

**Goethe Songs:** *Das Veilchen* (Mozart); *Wonne der Wehmut* (Beethoven); *Suleika*; *Suleikas zweiter Gesang* (Schubert); *Lied der Suleika* (Schumann); *Anakreons Grab*; *Blumengruss*; *Die Bekehrte*; *Frühling übers Jahr*; *Mignon I, II, III*; *Mignon (Kennst du das Land)* (Wolf); *Heidenröslein*; *Der König in Thule*; *Ganymed*; *Gretchen am Spinnrade* (Schubert); Irmgard Seefried (soprano) and Erik Werba (piano). Decca DL-9974, \$3.98.

IN the great days of rising romanticism, when German poetry and German music came together in the unprecedented combination known as the *lied*, no poet's name loomed larger than that of Goethe. This recital is only a small sample of his musical progeny, though it includes music of the five composers who were probably most beneficially influenced by the poet. If some of the songs are very familiar, most of them are less so; but every one is a first-class lied. Miss Seefried is a singer who understands the songs she sings; if her voice has not a wide variety of shadings she does a good deal with her diction and her phrasing. It seems to me it makes excellent sense to sing the Wolf *Mignon* lieder in just the girlish tone she uses; the composer has been charged with setting these texts too elaborately, but I think the criticism becomes pointless as we listen to this performance. On the other hand, a richer, more vibrant tone would help such a song as *Anakreons Grab*. Occasionally Miss Seefried's higher tones are pinched, and sometimes, as in *Heidenröslein*, one feels the key is a little too high for comfort. For all that, one is left with the impression that these are great songs, and this is always the sign of a superior performance.

—P.L.M.

# SOUND IDEAS

By LARRY ZIDE

RECENTLY I attended a stereophonic disc recording symposium held under the auspices of the Audio Engineering Society. To this audience of professional engineers, equipment manufacturers, and retailers, two stereo disc systems were demonstrated. The first was the Westrex, which was discussed here last month. Briefly, in this system, also called the 45-45 system, the two stereo channels are separately impressed on each side of the record groove, modulating it both sidewise and up and down. For the playback a special stereo cartridge separates the vibrations into two program outputs, which are fed through two amplifiers, each connected to its own speaker.

The other system demonstrated is a development of Jerry B. Minter, president of Components Corporation, with assistance by the technical staff of Electro-Sonic Laboratories, Inc. The Minter Stereo Disc is totally unlike the Westrex record. Its operation may be best explained by excerpting these paragraphs from Jerry Minter's description:

"The stereophonic properties of these discs is obtained from a supersonic, frequency modulated [FM] carrier recorded in the groove together with the ordinary lateral microgroove recording. They are played back with a conventional monaural cartridge, in which the single stylus operates laterally only, as is customary in ordinary monaural recordings.

"The M.S.D. System achieves double compatibility: not only can the playback cartridge reproduce monaural discs as well as M.S.D. recordings, but an M.S.D. disc when played back with a monaural system... will reproduce the combined output of both channels—not just one channel alone. Persons without stereo equipment can enjoy these recordings

exactly as they now enjoy their present single-channel high-quality recordings.

"This system requires a response up to 30 kilocycles per second. This can be achieved [on most wide range cartridges] by using a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -mil playback stylus, although adequate operation over most of the record can be had with the standard 1-mil stylus.

"In order to play back the monaural portion of the recording a standard lateral pickup only is required. . . . No normal pickup will damage the recording, since the groove is 100% lateral at all times. The vertical compliance of the pickup is no more important than when playing a normal lateral recording.

"In order to play back the stereo portion, any pickup having a wide range may be connected to a small [special] preamplifier having, in addition to the usual RIAA equalized preamp, another channel in parallel which provides limiting action and discrimination of the 24kc FM carrier used for the difference channel. After detection of [this] difference information, this must be recombined. . . . with the monaural channel (from the normal preamplifier) to produce the two stereo channels. These two stereo channels are then fed through two suitable amplifiers to the two speakers in the normal fashion."

These, then, are the two systems which were demonstrated to the audience at the AES-sponsored stereo disc symposium. To my ears both systems sounded very good indeed. The stereo spread of both was quite satisfactory. The Westrex system, however, did display significant rumble—one of its unresolved basic problems.

At this point it should be pointed out that the demonstrations were, in the main, largely academic. The RIAA and

its European equivalent have adopted the Westrex 45-45 system as the standard, and they seem determined to prevent any industry dispute comparable to the record-speed wars of the 1948-50 period. Therefore it seems unlikely that the Minter system, regardless of its merits, will ever see the light of a commercial release. Only time will tell. [Mr. Minter has agreed to do an extended article on his system for the *ARG*.—Ed.]

After the demonstrations a question-and-answer period was held. The panel under fire comprised, in addition to Mr. Minter, the following executives:

William H. Miltenburg, Chief Engineer, RCA Victor, New York City

Edwin A. Dickinson, Manager of Motion Picture Equipment, Westrex Corporation, New York City

William S. Bachman, Director of Engineering Research and Development, Columbia Records, New York City

The following questions and answers are extracted from the session:

**Q:** (to Mr. Bachman) I understand that you test stereo discs by comparing them directly with the original stereo tape. With good monaural sources the difference is indistinguishable. Has this been achieved with stereo discs?

**A:** No we have not yet achieved this, but at present the difference is not great. I would say we have *almost* achieved this.

**Q:** (to the panel) Why was the Westrex system chosen by the RIAA?

**A:** (by RCA) The RIAA felt that on an over-all basis the Westrex system had advantages over all other systems.

**Q:** What are some of these advantages?

**A:** First, the two channels are identical and have the same equalization, which makes for simplification of electronics. Secondly, there is no need for demodulation as on the Minter system, which requires a special electronic device.

**Q:** What is the distortion level of a Westrex disc?

**A:** About the same as a regular long-play record.

**Q:** How about compatibility? Are these

discs compatible, as several companies claim?

**A:** These discs are compatible *only* if the monaural cartridge is vertically compliant. [Many high-quality monaural cartridges are *not* vertically compliant.] In monaural reproduction this attribute is of little consequence.

**Q:** I am a manufacturer of high-fidelity prepackaged units. In these units I use the GE cartridge. Can my customers play stereo records on my present units without damaging the records?

**A:** (by Columbia) We have made extensive tests with the GE cartridge. It has good vertical compliance and *can* be used to play Westrex system discs monaurally.

**Q:** What about the wear of stereo records? How does it compare to the wear of a regular record?

**A:** Wear is a result of many factors: stylus pressure, tracking error, the compliance of the specific cartridge, and stylus and record cleanliness. Everything else being equal, wear is about the same on a stereo record.

**Q:** When will both RCA and Columbia have solid stereo catalogues?

**A:** Neither engineer felt he could answer this question, but the indications are that a sizable stereo disc repertory will be available this fall.

**Q:** If I may be permitted to draw an analogy, some years ago stereo cameras enjoyed a popular vogue and then died. Do you feel that stereo sound might suffer the same fate?

**A:** (by RCA) We certainly feel that stereo will last. For the past four years RCA has been in the stereo tape business. Interest in stereo has steadily grown and is still growing. At the present time we run through ten million feet of tape per week. This tape is certainly going somewhere, indicating a continuing strong interest in stereo.

**Q:** Will stereo discs eliminate tape?

**A:** (by RCA) No, not at all. In fact, we feel so strongly about the future of tape in stereo that we expect to be

(Continued on page 514)

# Folk Music

By ROBERT SHERMAN

**Songs of the Railroad:** The Merrill Jay Singers. Cabot CAB-503, \$3.98.

▲IT was about time somebody got out a collection of America's railroad songs, and this Cabot release is a very good one. The sixteen bright and colorful musical reminders of a bygone era range from such epics as *John Henry* and *The Wreck of the '97* to work songs (*Drill Ye Tarriers, Take This Hammer*), hobo songs (*Wabash Cannonball, Hallelujah I'm a Bum*), and an occasional old-time, sentimental balлад like *Daddy's On the Engine* (which features six-year old Wendy Leyden as soloist). The arrangements by Jimmy Leyden are clever, bouncy and sophisticated—sometimes a little too much so for my taste—while the Merrill Jay Singers perform with fine musicianship and lots of gusto. Authentic or no, the album provides highly enjoyable listening, and the lively liner notes by Freeman Hubbard, editor of *Railroad Magazine*, complement them perfectly. One complaint, though: their version of *Casey Jones* has the brave engineer jamming on his brakes, and stopping "within an inch of the east-bound freight"! I mean, how soft-hearted can you get?

**Songs of the Sea:** Lübeck German Sailors Chorus. Vox VX-25.580, \$3.98.

▲THE first thing to strike one about this is the full-color cover photo of a voluptuous young lady stretched languorously among some rocks and covered only slightly by a fish net. Eventually mind prevails over matter, and one gets around to turning the jacket over, only to encounter a delightful set of gag notes in the form of a wildly erudite treatise on the origins of the sea chantey by a certain Professor Mal-de-mer. Alas, when one finally gets the disc on the turntable, he discovers that the contents live up neither to the humorous promise of the annotations nor to the suggestive promise of the front cover. Instead, we are faced with heavy-handed, plodding performances of some thoroughly waterlogged German sailor songs. It may be authentic and all that, but I really feel that your best bet would be to find a shop that sells record jackets without the records.

**Yiddish Love Songs:** Ruth Rubin. Riverside RLP 12-647, \$4.98.

▲THIS charming group of Jewish songs is nicely interpreted by Ruth Rubin, with instrumental and occasional vocal support from Fred Hellerman. Miss Rubin,

who is widely known for her researches into the background and traditions of this music, sings with warm understanding and obvious compassion, and the collection has a quiet sincerity about it which is quite appealing. I find, however, that her voice lacks sufficient flexibility. Although her performances of some saucy courting songs and sprightly dances are most gratifying, many of the more sustained, lyrical selections (particularly the ones that are sung *a cappella*) fare less well and seem a little pale. Bear in mind, though, that this recording must stand comparison with such outstanding releases as Martha Schlamme's for Vanguard and Theodore Bikel's superlative Elektra album, which are pretty rough competition in any league. Riverside's sonics are excellent, as usual.

**Ain't it a Shame?** Bob Cort Skiffle. London LL-1774, \$3.98.

▲THE big "skiffle" craze, which overtook England a year or more ago, was sparked by a lively and fresh recording of the old Leadbelly favorite, *Rock Island Line*, by Lonnie Donegan, a member of a British jazz combo. The immediate success of the record prompted other jazz groups to add folk and pseudo-folk tunes to their repertoires, and soon the vogue was on. At any rate, this particular disc features the Bob Cort Skiffle, a group consisting of several guitarists, a bass player, and a washboard expert, with Cort taking the vocals as they swing their way through a dozen numbers including *The Frozen Logger, I'm Just a Country Boy*, and an anglicized version of Woody Guthrie's *This Land is Your Land*. Admittedly the performances have lots of vigor, but I just don't care at all for this somewhat amorphous style which attempts to combine jazz and folk elements and winds up retaining the true character and flavor of neither. Skiffle is one fad I hope will stay abroad.

**Honeymoon in Portugal:** The Trio Odemira and Carlos Ramos. Capitol T-10145, \$3.98.

▲ANOTHER in Capitol's "International" series, this disc, actually recorded in Lisbon, contains a dozen romantic Portuguese *fado* (a semi-blues form) and popular songs, performed alternately by tenor Carlos Ramos and a close-harmony group, The Trio Odemira. Their voices are soft and mellow (almost Italian-sounding), their styles smoothly sophisticated.

# The month's jazz

By MARTIN WILLIAMS

**Ragtime Piano Roll Classics.** Riverside 12-126, \$4.98.

▲WE are apt to think of ragtime as either a rather corny way of playing the piano or a kind of crude pre-jazz style. It was neither, and is a movement in American music we should all be acquainted with—not in its bowdlerized or commercialized form but the way one hears it here. It was an almost neoclassical movement which, despite rhythmic limitations, produced a quite sophisticated kind of multi-thematic compositional piano music ("condensed suites"), one might call its pieces) which contributed to jazz and which can be fascinating in itself. Because hardly anyone really plays it either correctly or well today, piano rolls, with all their limitations (and even when run a bit too fast as were some of these) probably preserve it best. This collection draws from three previous ten-inch LPs, and somehow did not select such important rags as Scott Joplin's *Maple Leaf*, *Cascades*, and *Magnetic Rag*, but it does have his ABACDA *New Rag*, his *Fig Leaf* and *Entertainer*, James Scott's lovely *Grace and Beauty*, Tom Turpin's robust *St. Louis Rag*, and Joseph Lamb's *American Beauty*, along with lesser works.

**Miles Davis: Relaxin'.** Prestige 7129, \$4.98.

▲ANOTHER collection from this label's backlog by (as the notes put it) *The Miles Davis Quintet*, and, I think, the best yet. One drawback is, of course, that saxist John Coltrane has become a much better soloist since these were made. The rhythm section is an outstandingly smooth, integrated, and responsive unit. Taking up one of Coltrane's final phrases, and borrowing a manner from Eddie Costa, pianist Red Garland develops some excellent things

on *Oleo*—a tune, by the way, which manages to make something fresh and fascinating from so overworked a base as *I Got Rhythm*. On that and on *It Could Happen To You* Davis is very cohesive—but he is a man of so much presence and individuality, of such an harmonic imagination and ability to condense and suggest, that he can be very interesting even in relative failures. Some bits of talk by the musicians and recording director are included and, even if they do pad the record a bit, seem a part of the picture.

**Benny Golson Sextet: The Modern Touch.** Riverside RLP 12-256, \$4.98.

▲IN the past year or so, Golson has attracted considerable attention as a composer; *Stablemates*, *I Remember Clifford*, and *Whisper Not* are widely played. Here *Out of the Past* is a very good melody and very harmonically suggestive for the soloists: *Venetian Breeze* is rather slight (and, if anyone cares, rather like an old Cootie Williams piece called *I Don't Know*); and *Blues on Down* is a blues "head" on a fairly conventional riff. There are also two pieces by Gigi Gryce, who, unlike Golson (and Golson's master, Tadd Dameron) here draws on boppish rhythmic figures rather than direct lyric lines. His *Hymn to the Orient* (despite that title) draws a relatively cohesive performance from the group, individually and collectively. His *Reunion*, however, raises a by-now trite set of chords (*I'll Remember April*) and the soloists don't resist the temptation to parade some clichés, with pianist Wynton Kelly avoiding them best. I am aware that this label is generous with recording time, but several times the soloist don't sound like they really have the tunes down. And some of the ensembles (say *Past*) don't state the melodies nearly so effectively as their lines deserve. Golson has a good Don Byas-

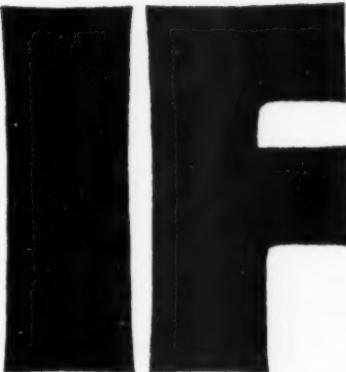
Lucky Thompson-Dexter Gordon style of tenor with fine fluency and movement (and often more sense of purpose than the other horns got), and trumpeter Kenny Dorham's sometimes melodic approach to improvisation is a good foil to Golson's arpeggios (and to J. J. Johnson's rather tepid successions of rhythmic phrases on trombone). At his best, Kelly is almost a combination of all these approaches and often works with a real imagination.

**Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers with Thelonious Monk.** Atlantic 1278, \$4.98.

▲ THIS is one of Thelonious Monk's rare appearances as a sideman, and his solos and accompaniments here are among his best, well worth anyone's time and attention. Inadvertently, he throws a glaring spotlight on the deficiencies of the members of Blakey's group, much as if Sir Laurence Olivier were to have a supporting role in the senior class play. Blakey is an old hand, of course, and that statement does not apply to his drumming. But John Griffin (tenor) and Bill Hardman (trumpet) are another matter. Only the first of them shows originality, and their obvious "killing time" in the middle of solos is painful to hear in juxtaposition to the obvious necessity in Monk's playing. In *Blue Monk*, for example, after Griffin has interpolated both *Sentimental Rhapsody* and *Rhapsody in Blue*, Monk starts a line with the very first note of his solo (notice that he is aware of where to begin even though Griffin is not too conscious of where to end), and continues on a direct path until his very last note. And Monk, if a glib phrase can serve for a long explanation, plays without adjectives. Equally remarkable is his entrance on *In Walked Bud*. There is much to be learned from Monk's lesson on this record. Only my objection to criticism of criticism, which is too rarified an atmosphere to suit my taste, prevents extended praise of Martin Williams' liner notes on Blakey and Monk. —J.G.

**The Modern Jazz Quartet: One Never Knows.** Atlantic 1284, \$4.98.

▲ THESE pieces were done for a film that is as yet unreleased. Much is made of the fact that this is John Lewis' first excursion into such work. Apparently he has taken the situation in his stride, for this music shows little difference from what Lewis usually composes. As pure music, it has all the charm and all the mannerism that the MJQ usually possesses: there are fugues, subtle counterpoint, *ppppp* passages that might cause you to think your phonograph has momentarily failed, and, over all the complexity,



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Connie Kay giving his impression of Tinkerbell. There are many fine moments on the set, mostly supplied by the impeccable Milt Jackson. John Lewis reveals more of the inner logic of his sparse style than usual, except for moments when he sounds like Edward MacDowell on a bad day. Lewis' music has its usual combination of freshness and the aura of familiarity. The best moments here, in my opinion, come on *Cortège*, with its eerie, unquoting suggestion of *Go Down, Moses*. The interplay between Jackson and Lewis is, as usual, amazing, and Percy Heath is unobtrusively excellent. Despite certain flaws, this is the MJQ's best album since "Fontessa".

—J.G.

# “Unlikely Corners”

*WHY NOT LOOK below the surface occasionally and find out what it is in the direct appeal of the popular tune which makes the audience go home whistling; to see if there is not some artistic impulse hidden in unlikely corners...*

—Ralph Vaughan Williams

**A**DD to the growing number of “talking” records a two-disc album devoted to interviews with **Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II** (M-G-M set 2E4-RP) conducted with intelligence by Arnold Michaelis. The two collaborators (a full record is devoted to each) reminisce, discuss their songs, engage in reasonably modest conversation, and present their own sides of the story—Rodgers at the piano, and Hammerstein in recitation. This is a highly interesting historical document, particularly for anyone seriously interested in the lyric theater. Michaelis might now consider similar interviews with other greats: obvious ones like Ira Gershwin, Harold Arlen, Cole Porter, Irving Berlin. That is, if they can be persuaded to talk.

Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe seem to be following with success in the paths of Rodgers and Hammerstein, what with their “integrated” scores and “smash” successes. One of their pre-“Fair Lady” hits, **Brigadoon**, was recently revived to great acclaim at New York’s City Center and also was committed to records by the perceptive Goddard Lieberson (Columbia CL-1132). Heard in this recording are Shirley Jones, Jack Cassidy, Susan Johnson, and Frank Porretta, with the orchestra and chorus under the able direction of Lehman Engel. “Brigadoon” boasts such a wonderful score—*The Heather on the Hill*, *Almost Like Being in Love*, etc.—that little need be said about it except that Columbia’s recording contains virtually the complete music, which neither of the other extant recordings (the original cast album on Victor and the sound track set on M-G-M) can claim. The singing is of high order; it seems to me that Jack Cassidy is more at home in this operettish score than in his previous show albums. Susan Johnson brings a good deal of spirit to the comic songs, and Shirley

Jones is in perfect voice for the sweet singing heroine.

For some reason there has been issued **The Ferrers Sing Selections from “Oh Captain!”** (M-G-M E-3687). As stated here earlier the songs from this show are not particularly timeless, though they are not without good touches. Mrs. Ferrer (Rosemary Clooney) does her usual fine job, and Ferrer sings with an abandon that is the particular genius of all us bathtub crooners. Ferrer, incidentally, is the director of “Oh Captain!”, and he does at least well enough with the songs, which have been rearranged by conductor Phil Moore. The arrangements are fine, but I think those songs that I have been taken by come off better in the original-cast album, particularly *Morning Music of Mortmartre* and *You’re So Right for Me*. If you saw the musical and considered it a memorable experience you probably won’t settle for less than the complete score by the cast; otherwise, here are a baker’s dozen of songs which could be called the highlights of the score.

Highlights of other scores are heard in **Four On The Aisle** (Columbia CL-1111), in which the Four Lads sing medleys from Porter’s “Kiss Me Kate”, Rodgers and Hart’s “Babes In Arms”, and Berlin’s “Annie Get Your Gun”. The shows and their songs are practically standard material by now and, while it would have been nice to have had less worn material, it is still refreshing to hear a contemporary singing group tastefully in tune, not given over to (what sounds to me like) the neurotic wailing of the “beat generation”, of which I hope we shall have heard the last soon. The Four Lads harmonize excellently to the music of Ray Ellis and his orchestra.

Diahann Carroll, a young beauty for whom I have a great deal of admiration, has followed up her fine Harold Arlen



Diahann Carroll. . . need not worry

album with another not quite so fine. While the songs are not on the same level as the Arlen songs, the new album, **Best Beat Forward** (VIK LX-1131), further proves that Miss Carroll has unusually fine taste. But I wonder if she is not too much at the mercy of arrangers. This album uses the services of no less than three: Sid Bass, Marion Evans, and George Siravo, each of whom also conducts his own arrangements. Miss Carroll sounds best when she sounds like herself, eschewing echoes of other vocalists who might be considered "great". Miss Carroll is great on her own; she has a beautiful voice; she has great style, and a particularly intelligent way with a lyric. But too often the arrangement gets in the way. Possibly this is merely an innocent attempt to be "commercial". We all like a little success, and no one can be blamed for that—to a point. Still, a disservice is being done one of our finest young talents by gimmickizing up her accompaniment in deference to contemporary, and transient, taste. Diahann Carroll can sing with the best of them and need not worry about the present or the future. Her new album is a good one for all the tampering, especially when she is given a fine song, *Old Devil Moon*, with an appropriate accompaniment, and is allowed to sing in her own straightforward style. I'm not ignoring the album's title, but beat me no more, daddy-o, you've gone too far.

No gentlemanly instincts would cause me to defend an album titled **Lizabeth** (Vik-1130), for the best of this album lies in the arrangements by George Wyle and Henri René, the latter conducting the orchestra also. The "Lizabeth" is Lizabeth Scott of the Cinema, whose stock in trade is a husky voice—and little else in my book. It is exploited here as in the movies. There are some pretty good songs in this album: a Frank Loesser-Jimmy McHugh number, *Can't Get Out of This Mood*; a little-known Cole Porter

item—and a good one—I'm In Love Again; an imaginatively arranged (with harpsichord) Arlen song, *Legalize My Name*; and an excellent song by Ann Ronell, *Willow Weep For Me*. Call me a cad, but I think, though this is a well planned and excellently scored album, that Lizabeth is a rather dull vocalist with a quite deplorable sense of rhythm. Good try, girl. Stout fella, René.

Frank Sinatra's renaissance has contributed to the reissue of many of his earlier efforts, going back to the days when you and I were younger. Victor has just released **Frankie and Tommy** (LPM-1569), latest in a series of albums devoted to the material of the days of the Big Bands. Here are several numbers from the early forties; *Oh! Look At Me Now, I Guess I'll Have To Dream The Rest, How About You?, There Are Such Things*. Sinatra sang these with the Tommy Dorsey Band. They are classics of their kind, I suppose. Sinatra's flexible, youthful voice sounds good, and he sang less pretentiously then than he does now. This album is a fine souvenir of a younger great singer, and a younger us (if you will forgive a bit of corn). There is, incidentally, no corn in the album; and a good job has been done with the dubbing.

**Saturday Night With Mr. C.** (RCA Victor LOP-1004) brings us Perry Como in a nice collection of vocal pleasantries. I shall say nothing about the Como penchant for studied relaxation, but his delivery is certainly warm. He sings some very nice songs, such as *It Could Happen to You, Come Rain Or Come Shine*, and *Love Letters*, with uncluttered backing from the Mitchell Ayres orchestra and the Ray Charles Singers. There are no surprises, no tastelessness, just the simple desire to entertain and please.

Morton Gould and Pablo Casals save whatever is worth salvaging of the film score to **Windjammer** (Columbia CL-1158), a most successful film about an ocean crossing. Gould has fashioned the score for it and Casals plays a short Catalan melody (*Song of the Birds*); there are also songs (which often figure in Gould's scoring) by a group calling themselves The Easy Riders (Terry Gilkyson, Richard Dehr, and Frank Miller). These quasi-folk songs do not make for very interesting listening. In fact, it is quite difficult to determine from the label who wrote what—though the cover credits the "Original Music Score" to Morton Gould. The record's label looks like the fine print in a contract, or a footnote in a tome on torts. Which is really beside the point, for no doubt the sound track is most effective in the theater. Still, considering Gould's stature and ability, why not let him really do a film score? —E.J.

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The one question that seemed to be most conclusively answered was the question of systems. The Westrex is the one that all the record companies will use. Almost every cartridge manufacturer is making a stereo cartridge to play Westrex discs, and completely packaged stereo disc players will be marketed shortly. There are already more stereo records on the market than there are players for them.

Next month I hope to have a complete story on the new four-channel stereo tape, as well as a roundup of what is available in stereo disc and tape pre-amplifiers. Later I expect to report on monaural and stereo equipment, especially that which is available in kit form. I would be much interested in knowing what *ARG* readers think this column should contain. Comments are welcome.

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